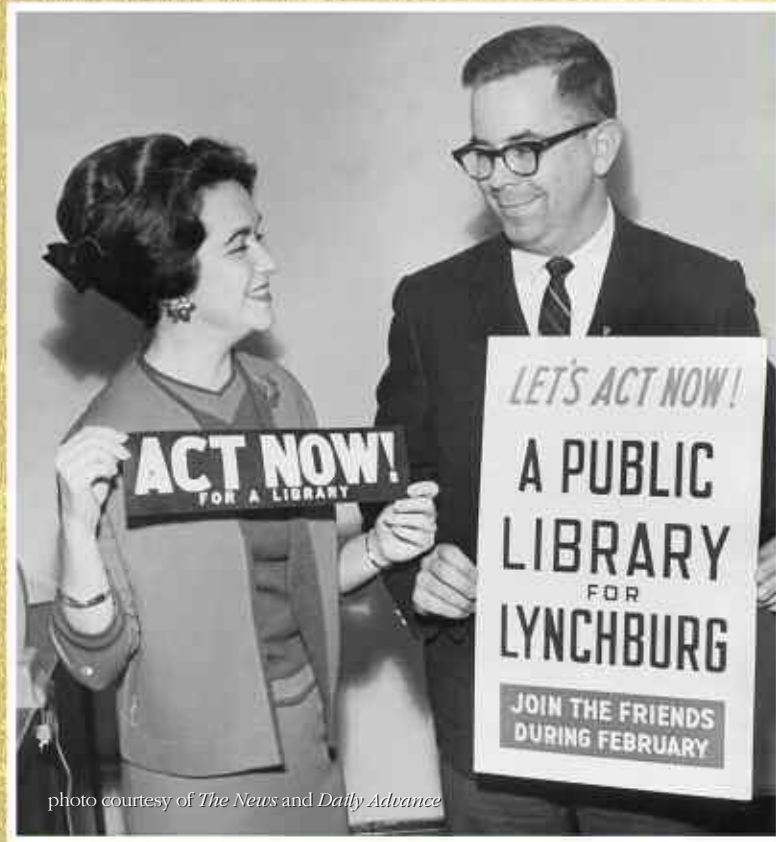


The Founding of the Lynchburg Public Library

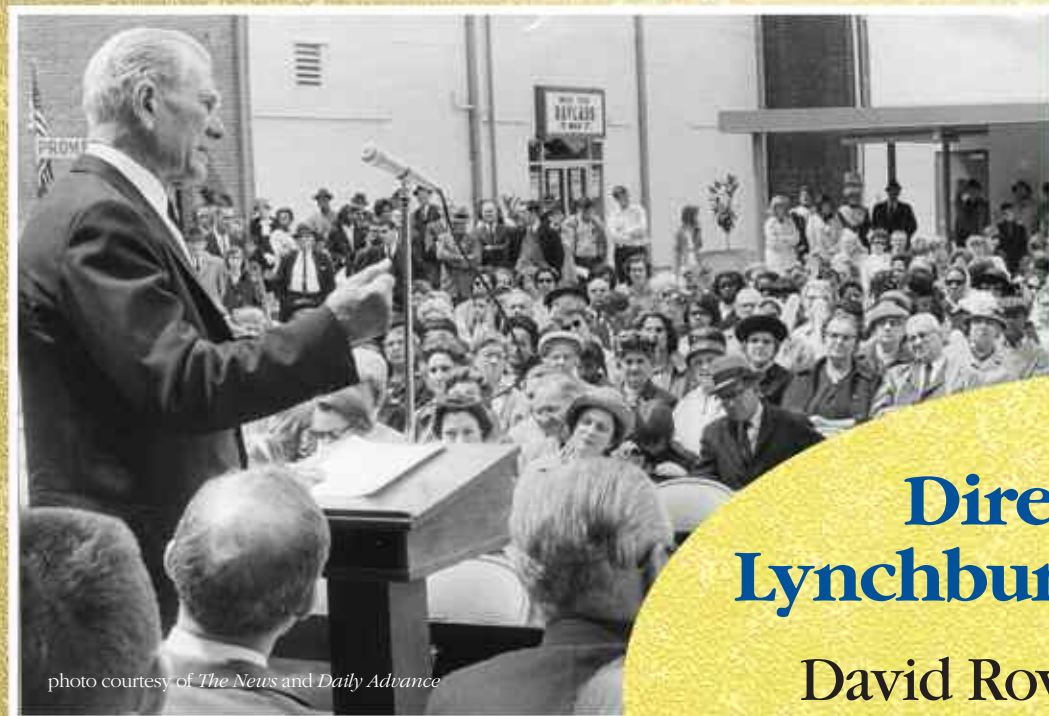


Mrs. R. Carroll Hudson of the Fort Hill Junior Woman's Club and Robert G. Taylor of the Junior Chamber of Commerce joined the Friends' campaign for a public library.



The library opening was a gala day for Lynchburg.

5,500. City Council voted to establish a public library. On April 16, 1966, the Lynchburg Public Library opened at 914 Main Street. Within eight months, the new library had circulated 100,000 books.



Senator A. Willis Robertson spoke at the library's opening ceremonies on April 16, 1966.

Directors of the Lynchburg Public Library

David Rowland (1965–1968)

Jane Black (1968–1974)

Lynn Dodge (1974–present)



In February 1969, Mrs. Patricia Bolling (left) assisted Mrs. William A. McIntosh in checking out the 400,000th book to circulate since the library's opening in April 1966.

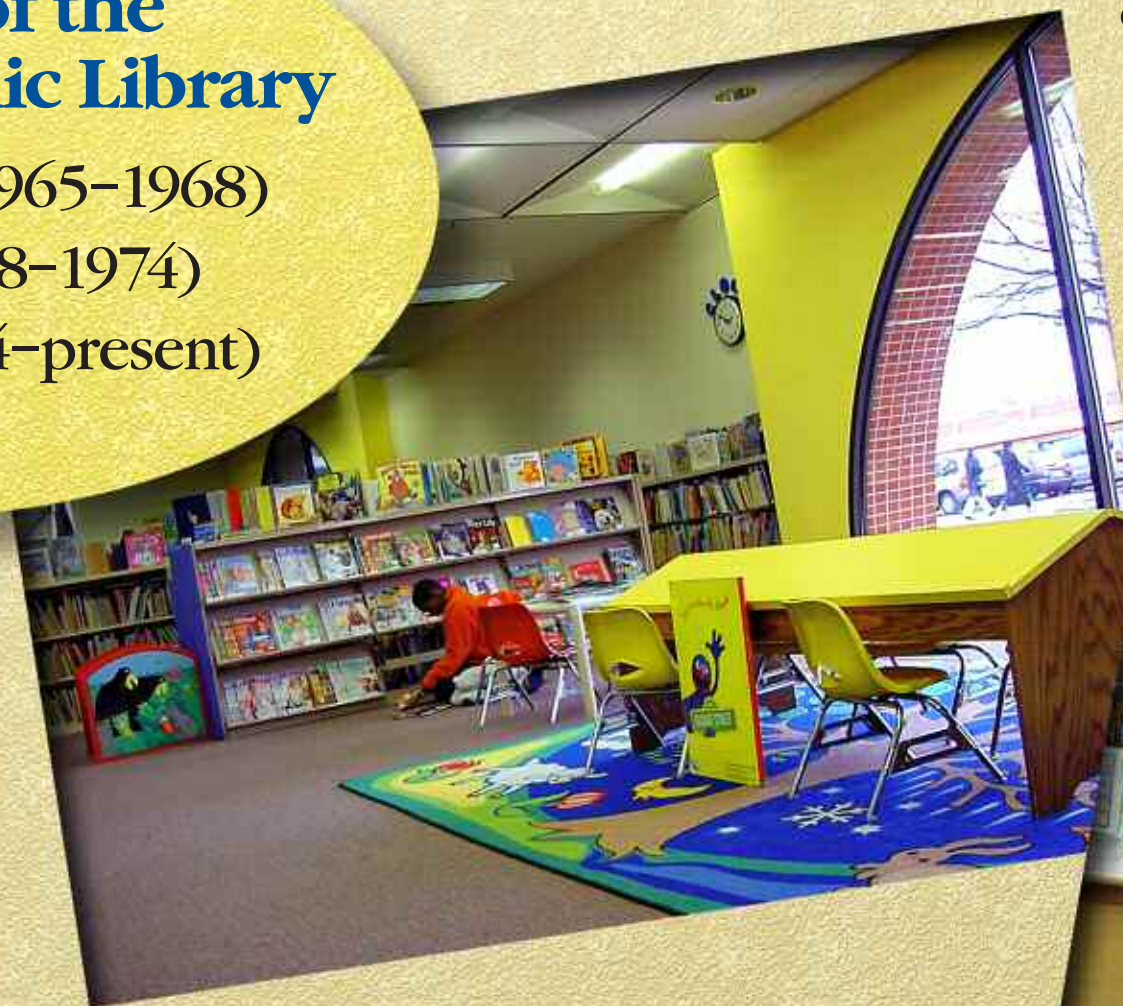


Public library service did not come to Lynchburg until the early 1900s. In 1904, Mrs. Mary Frances Jones endowed a library in memory of her husband, George Morgan Jones. As stipulated by its deed, the George M. Jones Memorial Library was to be "wholly for the use of white people without respect to religious distinction." The Jones Library opened in 1908 and provided the city's only "public" library service until 1966.

In the postwar 1950s, an economic boom brought new businesses and residents to the City. Many of the newcomers were young families who were well-educated and accustomed to public library service. At the same time, the Civil Rights Movement brought an increased social consciousness. These factors set the stage for establishing a public library that would serve all citizens equally.

In 1964 Lynchburg citizens, old and new, and from "town and gown," joined forces to organize the Friends of the Lynchburg Public Library and lead a campaign for a tax-supported library. After a citywide campaign, the Friends' membership reached

The library outgrew its first home, and in October 1984 moved to its present location at the Plaza shopping center in the former Sears store. Circulation increased 80 percent overnight at the new, more central location. In 1987 the downtown branch and public law library opened in the lower level of City Hall.



Since its founding, the Lynchburg Public Library has been one of Lynchburg's most widely used city services. Today there

are 29,000 registered borrowers and a collection of 150,000 books, audiocassettes, videos, CDs, DVDs, and MP3s. Annually 60,000 persons use the PCs, and 465,000 items circulate. With programs for both children and adults, the Lynchburg Public Library fulfills its purpose of providing barrier-free access to information, promoting literacy, and supporting an informed citizenry, lifelong learning, and a love of reading.

